R410S-5-16

THE CONFERENCE BOARD

Characteristics of Job Seekers

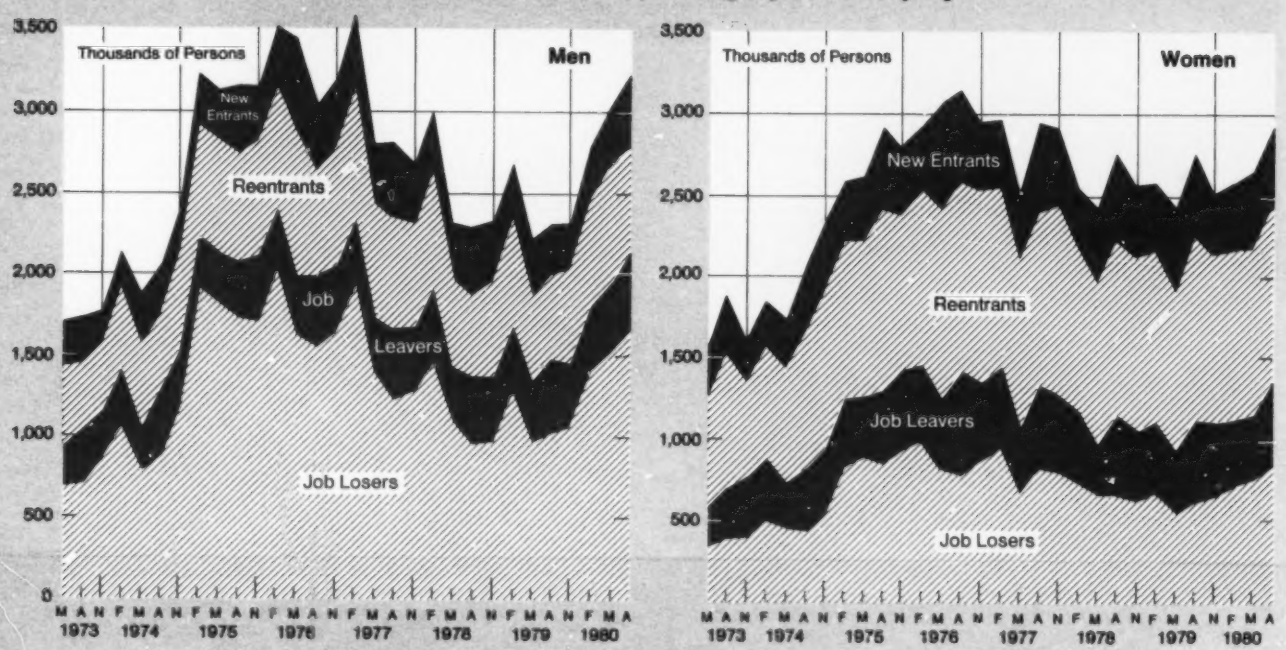
Economic Road Maps

No. 1889

October, 1980

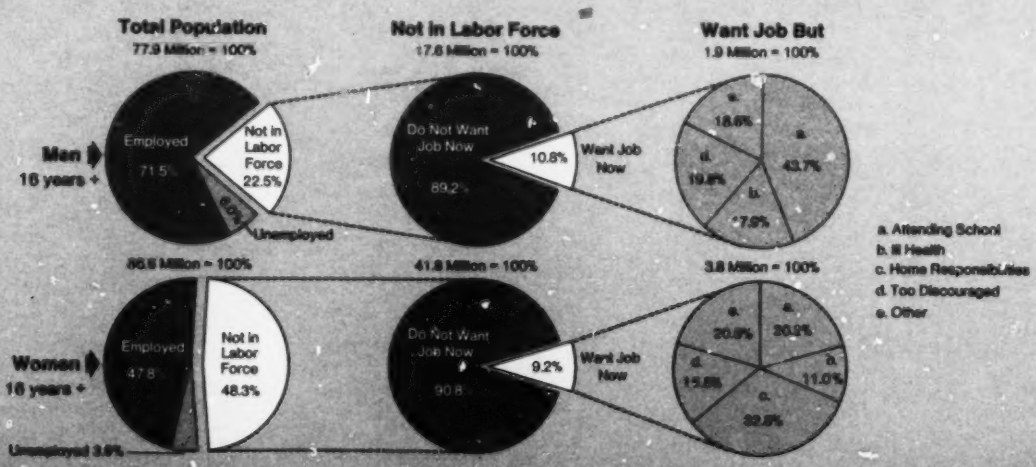
There are currently about 6½ million unemployed adult men and women looking for jobs. In addition, some people who are already working are doubtlessly looking for different jobs, but little information exists about this group. The composition of unemployed job seekers is roughly similar to that of the work force. Job holders are currently about 57% male and 43% female, while job seekers are 54% male and 46% female. The female job seeker is most likely to be reentering the labor force—she is someone who worked at one time, left the labor force, and now wants to return to work. The male job seeker is more likely to be a job loser, either as a result of a layoff or for some other reason.

Unemployed Job Seekers by Category of Unemployment


Thousands of Persons
Men
New Entrants
Reentrants
Job Leavers
Job Losers
Thousands of Persons
Women
New Entrants
Reentrants
Job Leavers
Job Losers
3,500
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A M J S N J M A
1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980

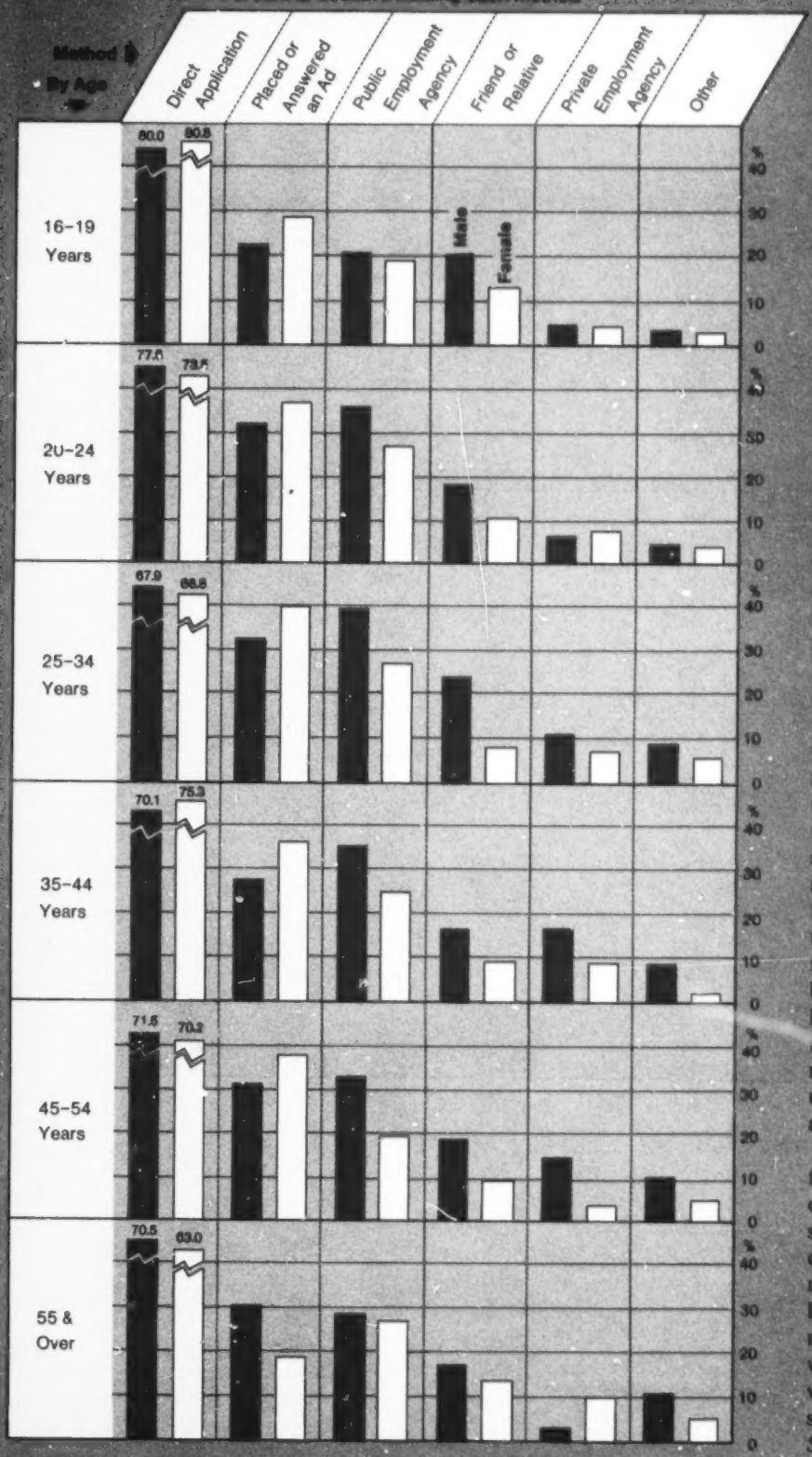
Population by Labor Force Status

3rd Quarter 1980



Methods of Job Search, 1980

Percent of seekers utilizing each method



Surveys of job search methods consistently show that the less structured and more personalized search techniques—answering ads, asking friends and relatives about job possibilities, and direct application—are relied upon to a greater extent than more formal methods such as referral by a public or private employment service, union hall, school placement office, etcetera. The surveys show that applying directly to a potential employer is the method used most frequently by all unemployed job seekers. However, the reported high use of this method may be due in part to consistent underreporting of the extent to which referral by a friend or relative or the answering of a want-ad results in the searcher making a direct application. (The data, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS] surveys, are dependent on the respondents' concepts of what constitutes a job search method, and their recollection as to which ones were actually used, since no specific methods are mentioned by the BLS interviewer.)

The more formal methods offer a wider scope of job opportunities and may provide more extensive information about them. Adequate information about opportunities is perhaps the single most important aspect of a job search, and the availability of such information may be of special value to those entering or reentering the labor force, as well as to those who have been working in the same job for a long time. Conversely, the less structured job search methods provide a mechanism to help validate, expand upon, and personalize information about job opportunities.

There are few distinguishable differences in methods between younger or older, or male or female, job seekers. One difference that does stand out, however, is that women are a little more likely to use newspaper ads and a little less likely to utilize friends and relatives—a phenomenon related to what some experts call the need for women to develop their own "buddy system."

Ken Goldstein

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics; The Conference Board.

ECONOMIC ROAD MAPS

Eva Culen, Editor — Chuck N. Tow, Lead Chartist

Prepared in The Business Conditions Analysis Department—Lora S. Collins, Director
Prices for Quantities of this chart will be supplied on request to Information Service.

Published by
THE CONFERENCE BOARD
845 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

THE CONFERENCE BOARD IN CANADA
25 McArthur Road
Ottawa, Ontario, K1L-6R3, Canada

THE CONFERENCE BOARD IN EUROPE
Avenue Louise, 326 - Bte 48
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

RMCS-5.M

THE CONFERENCE BOARD

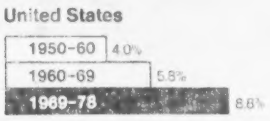
Regional Incomes in the United States

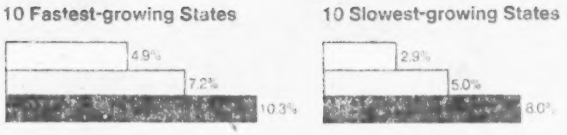
Economic Road Maps

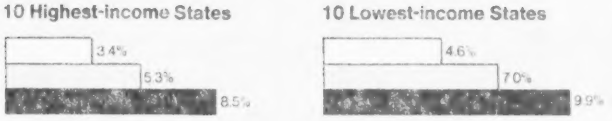
Nos. 1872–1873 February, 1980

The 50 American states are enormously diverse. They vary in size and population, of course, but of greater interest is the diversity in their economic structures and their income levels. Although the states' per capita incomes have been converging over time, great differences remain. In 1940, the average per capita income in the poorest fifth of the states was only 36% of the average in the top fifth; by 1978, the gap had closed to the point where the bottom fifth's average income was 72% of that in the top fifth. The convergence has occurred because per capita income has persistently grown faster in low-income than in high-income states. The low-income states have always tended to be in the southern regions, and this is still true despite years of rapid income growth in those areas.

Average Annual Growth of Per Capita Personal Income

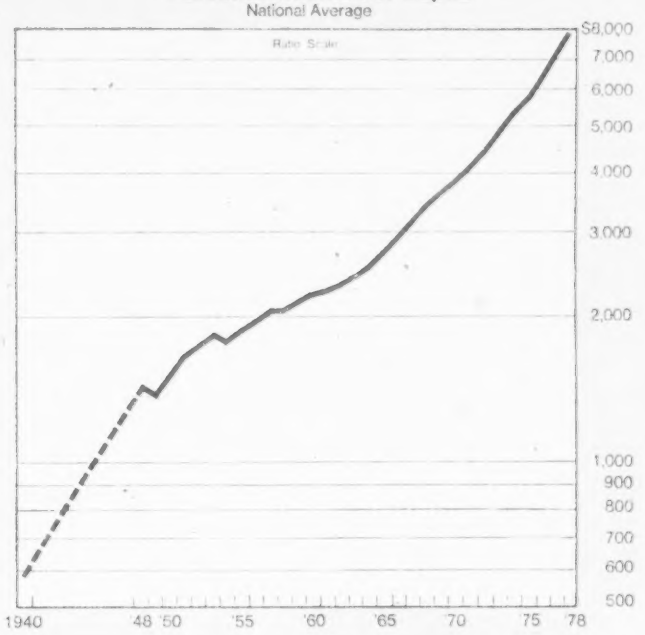


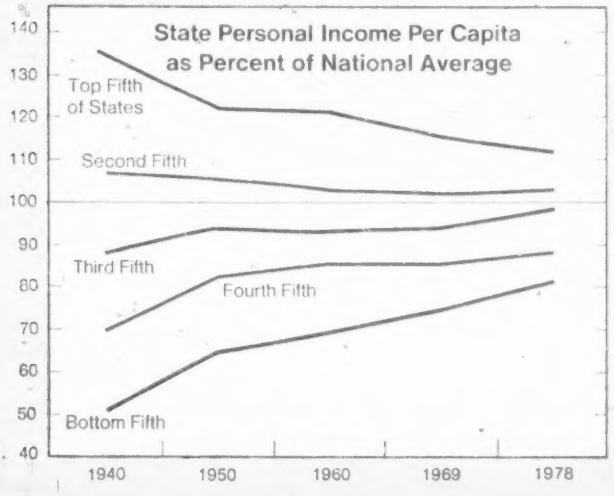


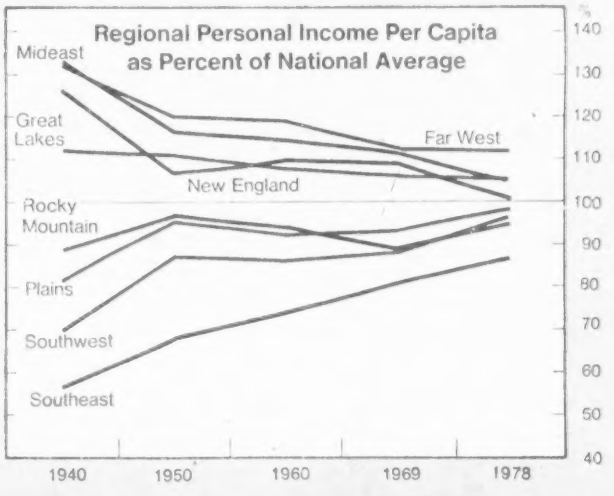


Personal Income Per Capita

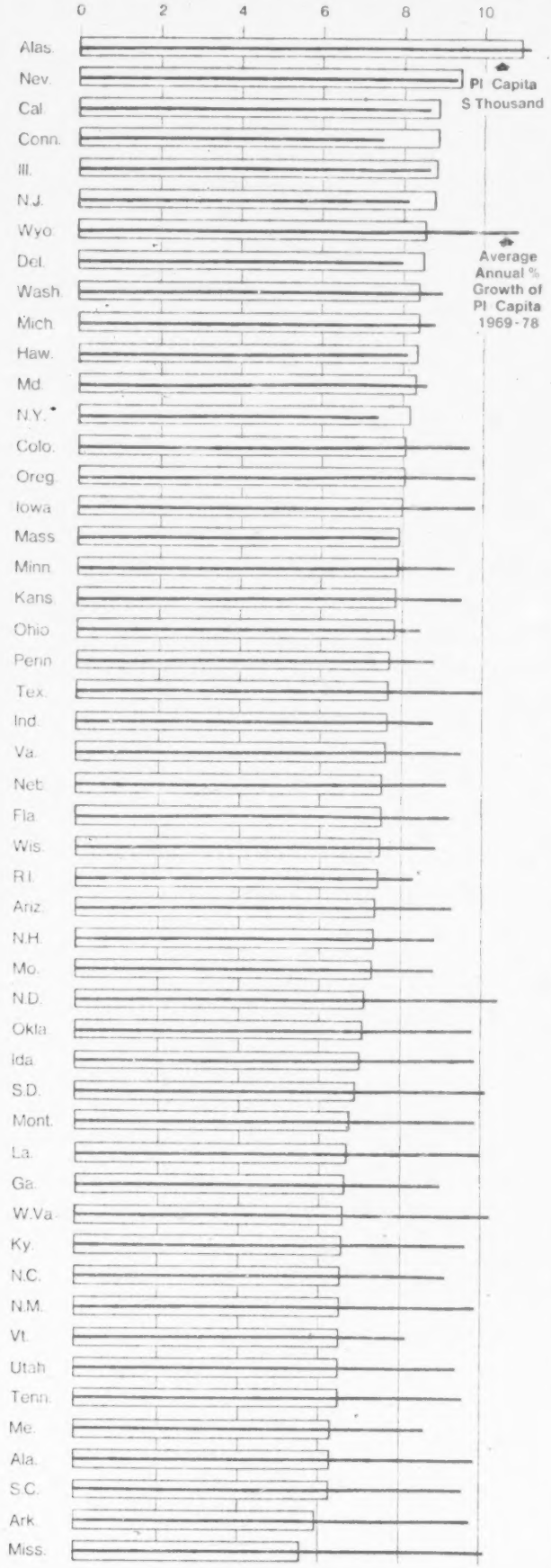
National Average

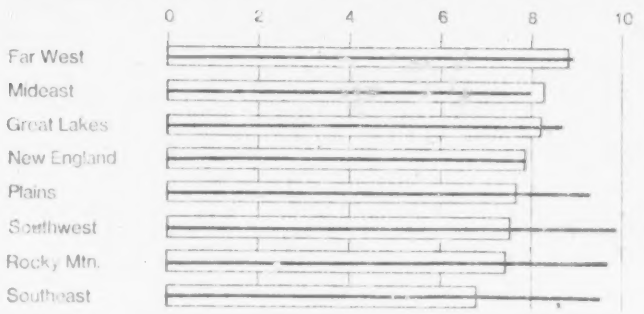






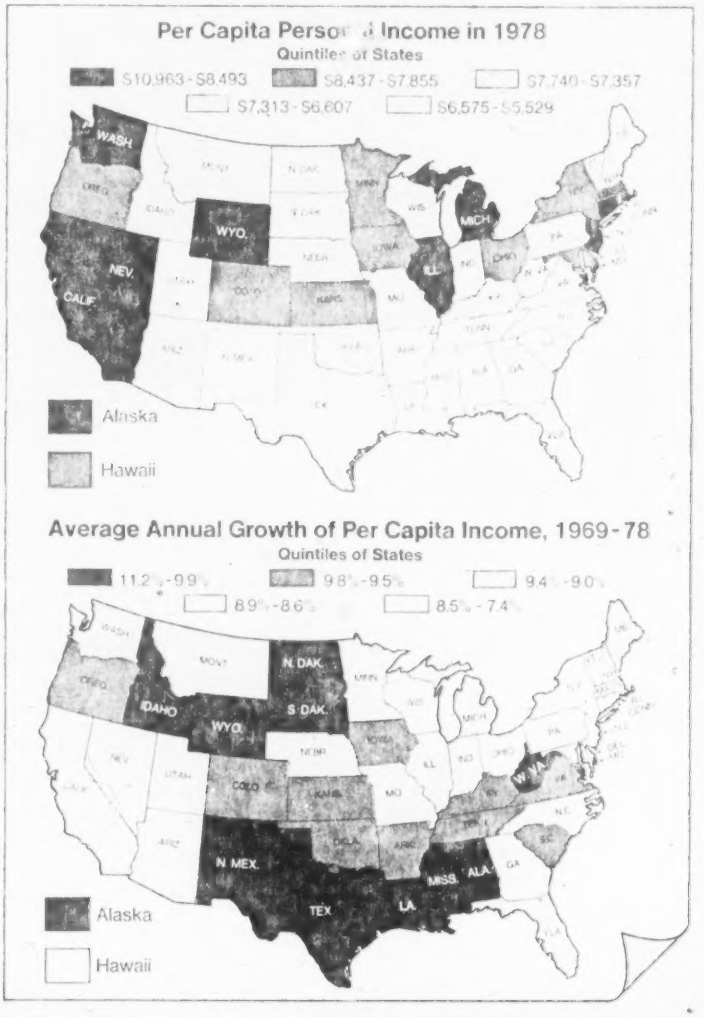
Per Capita Personal Income in 1978 and its Average Annual Growth, 1969 - 78





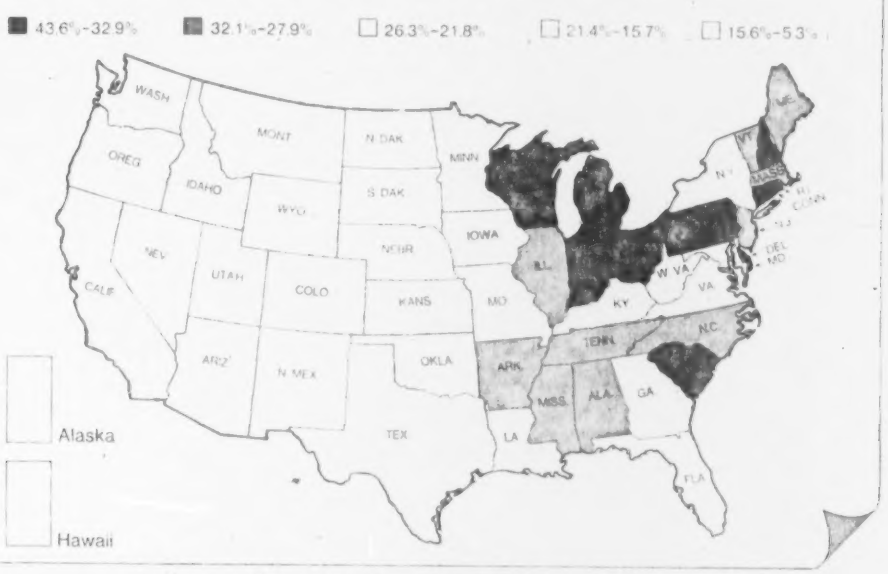
The measure used here is "personal income," which consists mainly of wages, salaries and the income of the self-employed, but also includes dividends, interest and rents (about 14% of total personal income), and transfers such as social security and welfare (about 13 percent).

The convergence of per capita incomes over time is due to many social and economic forces. Some were outlined in a 1978 article by Howard Friedenberg of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the government agency that produces the data. These include the migration to richer northern states of large, poor, southern farm families; the growing geographic dispersion of industry;

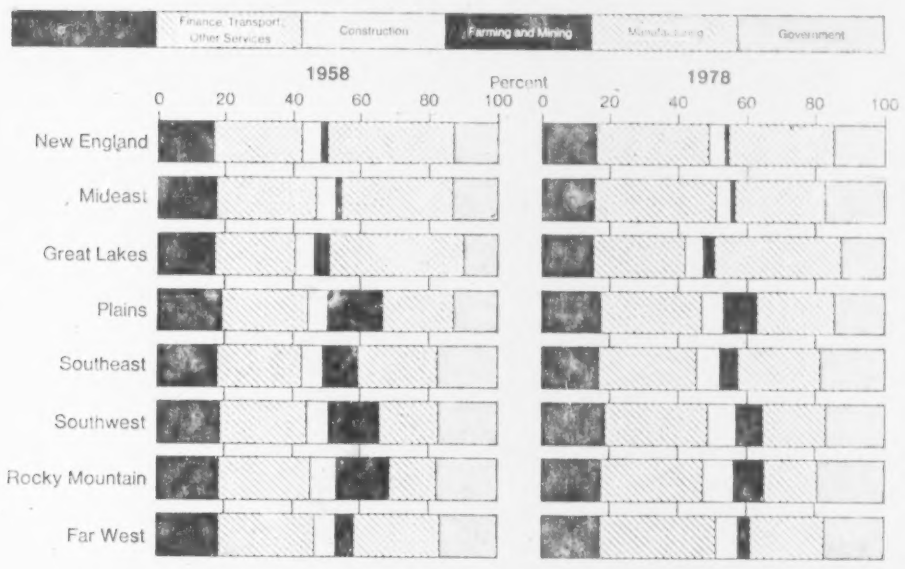


Importance of Manufacturing, 1978

Quintiles of States, by Share of Manufacturing in Labor and Proprietors' Income



Composition of Labor and Proprietors' Income

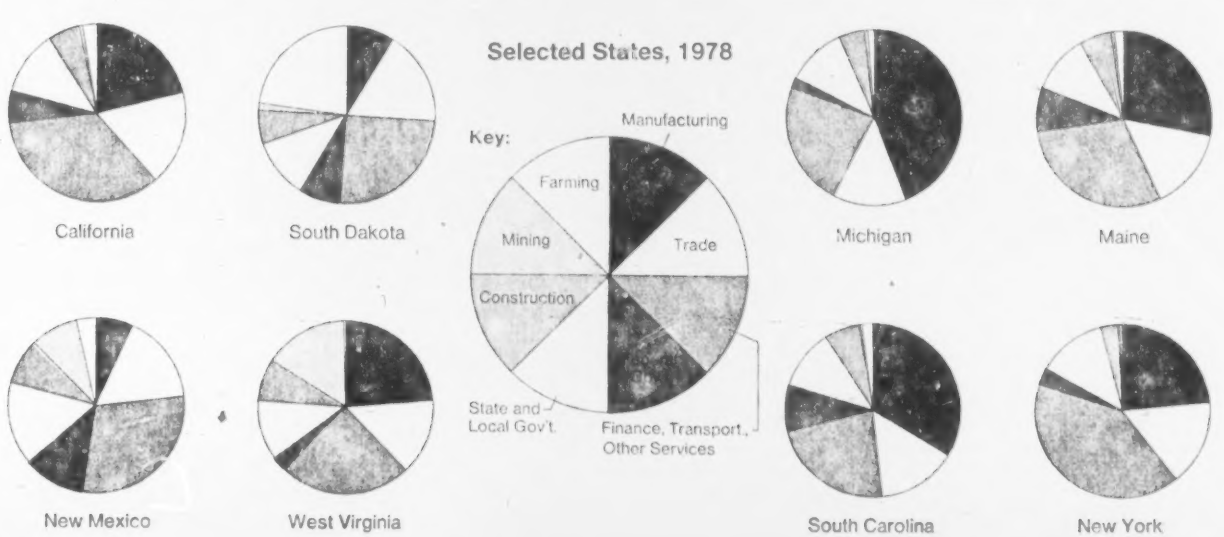


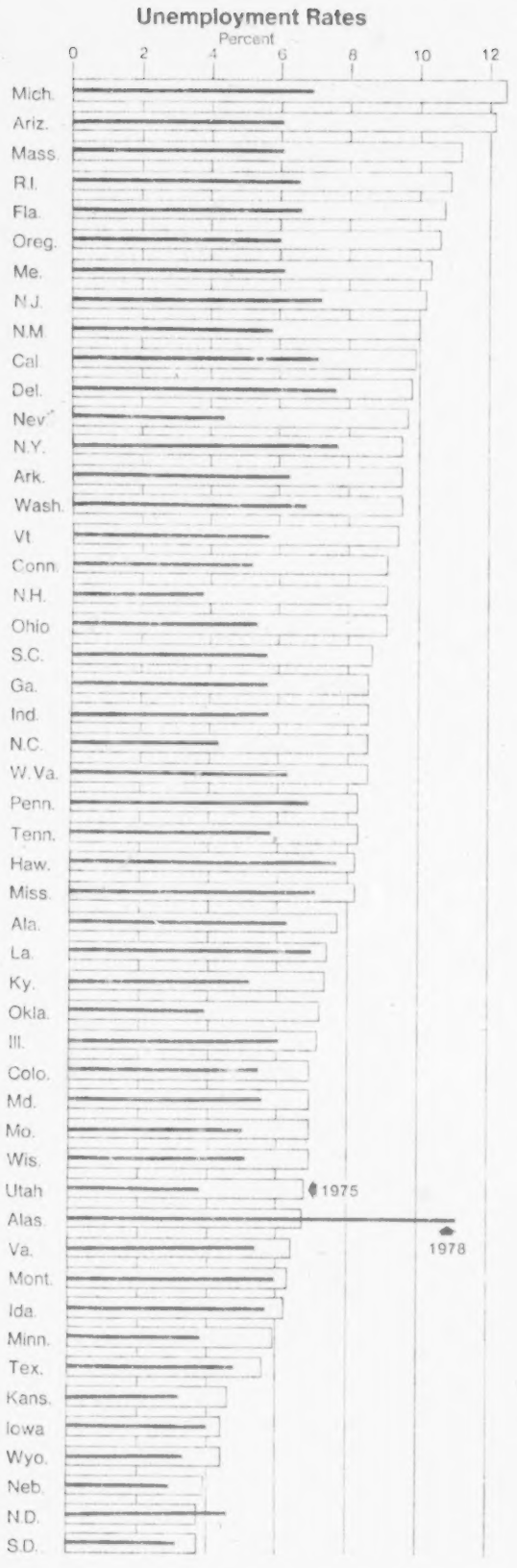
and the relatively greater impact of agricultural mechanization in regions where farming was important. Moverover, the move off the farm in the South and West was generally into jobs less cyclically sensitive than those dominant in the North and East, and this has boosted the Southern and Western long-term growth trend.

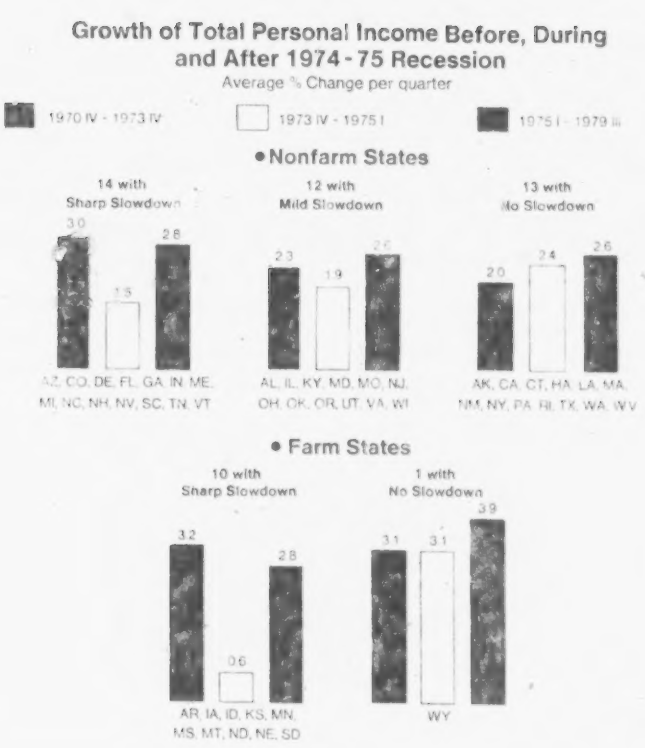
For all that the states' incomes are converging, there has been little change in the top 10. Eight of the top 10 in 1978 had been in the group in 1960. Wyoming and Michigan moved into the group, and New York and Massachusetts moved out. There has been more turnover in the bottom 10: Between 1960 and 1978, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana and West Virginia moved out; and Maine, New Mexico, Utah and Vermont dropped down into this group.

Manufacturing has its greatest importance in the industrial arc from the Great Lakes through New England. The major exception in the picture is New York, where manufacturing accounted for only 23% of labor and proprietors' income in 1978, not much different from the national average of 26 percent. New York has an exceptionally heavy concentration of service industry payrolls. Outside the old industrial states, the ones where manufacturing is most important are mostly in the "New South." Farming accounted for only 2% of the nation's total labor and

Selected States, 1978







proprietors' income in 1978, with the share exceeding 5% in only 10 states.

The pie charts show the 1978 earned income distribution in selected states, including the most agricultural (South Dakota) and the ones with the heaviest concentrations in manufacturing (Michigan) and services (New York). The income shares from trade, construction and state-local government do not vary much from state to state but the share from the Federal Government ran from about 20% in Alaska and Hawaii to 2% in Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin in 1978.

The importance of manufacturing in a state's economy has a large role in determining its vulnerability to the business cycle. However, the general 1973-1975 recession coincided with a farm income slump that followed a previous boom. Thus, the farm states went through a cyclical swing even worse than that in the industrial states. The average rate of increase of U.S. personal income was 2.4% per quarter in the cyclical expansion from 1970 through 1973, 2.0% in the recession to early 1975, and 2.6% from the recession's end through 1979. Fourteen nonfarm states had slowdowns at least twice as sharp as the national 0.4 percent. Another 12 suffered lesser slowdowns, while 13 had no slowdown at all.

Lora S. Collins

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; The Conference Board.

ECONOMIC ROAD MAPS

Eva Culen, Editor — Chuck N. Tow, Lead Chartist

Prepared in The Business Conditions Analysis Department—Lora S. Collins, Director
Prices for Quantities of this chart will be supplied on request to Information Service.

Published by
THE CONFERENCE BOARD
845 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

THE CONFERENCE BOARD IN CANADA
25 McArthur Road
Ottawa, Ontario, K1L 6R3, Canada

THE CONFERENCE BOARD IN EUROP
Avenue Louise, 326 - Bte 48
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium